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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 8074

RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1518

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RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY

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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 002310

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SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY TAUSCHER MEETS INDIAN SPECIAL ENVOY SARAN ON NONPROLIFERATION AND CIVIL NUCLEAR ISSUES

Classified By: Ambassador Timothy J. Roemer. Reasons: 1.4 (B, D).

¶1. (C) Summary: Under Secretary Tauscher reviewed the next steps in U.S. nonproliferation efforts in a November 12 meeting with Indian Special Envoy Saran. Saran expressed support for President Obama's vision of a nuclear weapons free world and said India wanted to work with the U.S. on a forward looking approach. Tauscher outlined the Administration's plans to secure CTBT ratification in the U.S. Senate and pressed for India to move forward on ratification concurrently with the United States. Saran stressed that CTBT ratification was a political decision for India and the time was not yet ripe to move forward. Ambassador Roemer and U/S Tauscher sought assurances from Saran that outstanding implementation issues surrounding the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement would be speedily resolved. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher met Indian Special Envoy Shyam Saran in a 45-minute long meeting on November 12 to discuss the Strategic Security Dialogue to be held November 13 as well as nonproliferation issues (START, FMCT, CTBT, NPT Revcon) and implementation of the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. Tauscher was accompanied by Ambassador Roemer.

India Supports Forward Looking Approach

¶3. (C) Special Envoy Saran stressed the importance Prime Minister Singh placed on moving forward in our discussion on nuclear issues as part of our broader Strategic Dialogue. The GOI appreciated the Obama Administration's forward looking approach and the President's commitment to a nuclear weapons free world. These views coincided closely with India's approach, Saran observed, but the critical question was whether the international community could be energized to accomplish this goal. He noted that India was committed to working closely together with the U.S. in Geneva on FMCT discussions and that India had sent a sherpa to the U.S.-led discussion of the Nuclear Security Summit.

U.S. Nonproliferation Next Steps

¶4. (C) U/S Tauscher sketched out a series of milestones for U.S. nonproliferation efforts over the next several months. The START Agreement with Russia will expire on December 5; the U.S. is confident it will be able to conclude a bridging agreement before that date and will seek Senate ratification of a follow-on treaty in 2010. The legislatively mandated Nuclear Posture Review must also be completed by February. This document would examine the role of nuclear weapons in the U.S. force structure and describe how this corresponds to U.S. bilateral and multilateral commitments. On FMCT, the U.S. aimed at reaching a decision in Geneva in January and hoped Pakistan would come around by then, but she stressed that the U.S. was committed to moving forward. The President's FY 2011 budget to be released in February would also add information to the picture. On CTBT, the Administration intended to seek ratification of the treaty, but Tauscher stressed that it would require careful spadework and said no one underestimated the challenges of getting the treaty ratified.

CTBT - Way Forward

¶5. (C) U/S Tauscher outlined how the Administration would handle ratification efforts, noting that the treaty may not be ratified in 2010. Timing of a ratification effort would

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depend in the first place on how certain the Administration was that it had the votes. The U.S. would also take into account how quickly START could be ratified. Successful ratification would depend on carefully building the case -- concerns about nuclear weapons stockpile management and potential cheating by other signatories needed to be addressed. A National Academy of Science study and a National Intelligence Estimate would go far in addressing these issues for U.S. lawmakers.

¶6. (C) Saran noted that India had concerns about both China and Russia engaging in unspecified "testing activities" and asked how this fit in with U.S. ratification efforts. He said questions of this kind would certainly figure in India's internal debate on CTBT ratification. Tauscher acknowledged such concerns, but also stressed that this type of issue should be discussed in a more restricted setting with technical experts. Saran said India would follow up on this issue.

¶7. (C) U/S Tauscher turned to India's CTBT ratification plans, stressing that the U.S. would be concerned if it entered into its own ratification effort and there were doubts that India would move forward. Tauscher said she expected India would arrive independently at a decision to ratify the CTBT but the U.S. hoped this decision would occur concurrently with the U.S. decision to move forward. Saran underlined that India had not made a decision on ratification and that any such decision would be made at the political level. The GOI had "serious doubts" about some aspects of the Treaty and felt that the text had been agreed on without taking into account Indian reservations. Ambassador Roemer pushed Saran for a sense of the timing of such a decision and if the GOI could move it soon. Saran responded that CTBT was "not a current issue" for India, but as the U.S. ratification efforts moved forward, India would be forced to consider its own next steps.

NPT Review Conference

¶8. (C) U/S Tauscher underlined U.S. interest in a productive 2010 Revcon that looked at all three pillars -- nonproliferation, disarmament and civil nuclear cooperation.

Saran hoped that the Revcon would not become another occasion to put pressure on India to sign the NPT. In response to his question about how the Iranian question would be handled, Tauscher described U.S. efforts with the P5 + 1 to reach an agreement with Tehran, but pointed out that Iran's internal political instability complicated the picture. Saran noted that Iranian FM Mottaki would be visiting New Delhi next week and said that India supported P5 + 1 efforts that built confidence in dealing with Iran.

Civil Nuclear Agreement

¶ 9. (C) Ambassador Roemer pressed Saran for speedy implementation of outstanding measures from the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, including providing Section 810 licensing assurances and introducing and enacting liability legislation in India's Parliament. Saran thought there would be no problem in getting liability legislation through Parliament during its next session, which begins next week and thought that Section 810 assurances were also moving ahead, but promised to make inquiries. He flagged concerns about ongoing reprocessing negotiations. Tauscher agreed that there was still some distance to go on reprocessing, but stressed our interest in trying to sort out remaining issues in the run up to the Prime Minister's visit to Washington.

ROEMER